

Wycombe Wanderers 3, Leytonstone 1

WYCOMBE WANDERERS dug deep into their reserve strength on Saturday. But despite abusing two glorious scoring chances and handing Leytonstone a goal gift wrapped, they still collected the points with ease at Loakes Park.

There was no Pritchard, still suffering from a knee injury, sustained against Tooting and Mitcham and aggravated in Helsink; there was no Blunt—unavailable—no Baker and no Gale; but slap happy Leytonstone, normally one of the Isthmian League's toughest 'live' sides—never displayed co-ordination or intellect to stop Wanderers making it 10 wins and a draw in 11 outings.

Johnny Hutchinson and Tony Horseman formed into a classic double act to menace the visiting backs from the very start. And as early as the sixth minute the combination put Wycombe ahead.

In a move typical of many Blues goals these days, Hutchinson slipped a short pass through the Leytonstone lines for Horseman to finish off with goalkeeper Tony Mackie caught both ways.

The cross for Bodger's goal had originally come from Bernie Bremer, but otherwise the former Wealdstone striker now playing in Wanderers mid-field, again lacked the work rate required in his new role.

So here at least was one department of play Leytonstone could control. for Ted Powell, brought from the back line to fill for the missing Baker, led far less effect on the

By Mike Whitesman

game than usual, leaving Wycombe's attack to create their own build up.

Wanderers had been in the lead only two minutes when they suffered their first set-back. Scotland's amateur international Ian Maclean was hurt in a collision with team mate Vince Faulkner, and after treatment was carried off on a stretcher. The injury necessitated 12 stitches in his head, which will mean that he will be out of the Wanderers side for at least a week.

The accident brought substitute Ian Rundle into play at full-back for most of the game, during which he produced the kind of improved form that dominated his football towards the end of last season.

If lacking a large slice of support from mid-field, Wycombe's forward line made up for deficiency themselves and added to the discomfort of a confused Leytonstone defence. Only a incredible miss by Geoff Anthony saved them after 27 minutes as the little Welshman lashed the ball over the bar from six yards.

The visitors never learned to

cope with the sudden 1-2 of Hutch and Tony in front of their net. After 41 minutes, Mackie blocked Hutchinson's drive, following just such a move. Although it seemed that Horseman could not miss scoring from the rebound, he shot wide at close range with no one to beat.

Like Anthony's error, it needed to be seen to be believed, and even then there were those who thought the time had come to pay their optician a visit.

As play entered injury time, a second set-back hit the Wanderers; or rather they hit themselves. For a total lack of defensive covering caught Maskell unaware that he allowed Les Picking's shot to fly straight through his grip and into the goal for the equaliser.

For one, the question could be asked, "Where was the Wycombe defence?" but any inquest came later. Instead Wycombe scored twice before the interval, to put a truer reflection on the first half.

Three minutes later, the terrible twins repeated their earlier success. Hutchinson prodded the ball ahead, Horseman turned, beat off Thomson's challenge and then rounded Mackie to slot home a second.

Obviously shaken by his recent mistake, Maskell had anxiety written all over his face as he went down to save a low-level shot from Picking. But at the other end, following a short corner, Wycombe's skipper, John Delaney, headed in another goal to make it three-one, seconds before the half-time whistle.

A game within a game developed during the second half,

played for the most part by Hutchinson, Mackie and the Leytonstone cross-bar which the Wycombe wing-man headed the ball on to after 62 minutes and the visiting 'keeper directed another shot over six minutes later. Hutchinson had twice brought Mackie into action in the first two minutes of the new period.

Faulkner was involved in another incident again as the innocent by-stander, when Walker came off worse from a foul on Wycombe's burly No. 6, the Stones' left-winger was helped off the pitch to booing by the large unsympathetic Loakes Park crowd. Bobby Haynes substituted for the final 15 minutes.

Mackie's performance did much to hold Wanderers to a goalless 45 minutes. He bodied down a full-blooded drive by Horseman in the 79th minute and then halted Keith Searle as he tried to follow up.

But Mackie could have done little to prevent Anthony's sliding shot crossing the line, had it been about 12 in. farther to the left.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS: J. Maskell; P. Fuschillo, I. Maclean (sub. J. Rundle, eighth minute); E. Powell, J. Delaney, V. Faulkner; G. Anthony, A. Horseman, K. Searle, B. Bremer, J. Hutchinson.

LEYTONSTONE: A. Mackie; A. Jennings, B. Moffit; D. Andrews, M. Thomson, J. Charles; J. Albon, T. Scott, J. Maloney, L. Picking, R. Walker (sub. R. Haynes, 25th minute).

Referee: Mr. F. Clarke (Upminster).

Attendance: 2,850.

Match statistics (Wycombe figures first): First half—shots at goal 7-4, shots off goal 7-6, corners 4-0, fouls 7-9, off-side 3-4. Second half—shots at goal 5-0, off-goal 7-3, corners 6-1, fouls 4-9, off-side 3-0. Total shots at goal 12-4, off goal 14-9, corners 10-1, fouls 10-18, off-side 6-4.